

February 2, 2021

Dear Honorable Representative:

Our mission at AFSCME Council 5 is to advocate for excellence in services for the public, dignity in the workplace, and opportunity and prosperity for all workers. We believe that there is dignity in all work, and there should be dignity and safety for *all workers*.

The pandemic has exacerbated a troubling trend in our country - the elite and powerful horde more and more wealth while the working class is left with a smaller and smaller share of their own economic production. The rungs on our economic ladder have cracked and broken and abandoned the least fortunate among us. Low wage workers see increases in their rent, utilities and health insurance outpace increases in their paychecks; they are forced to find a second or third job just to make ends meet.

It's time we prioritize policies which repair our economic ladder and restore The American Dream as a reality for *all working people*. We can afford to invest more in working people by increasing minimum workplace standards for workers.

A uniform Earned Sick and Safe Time policy will deliver dignity to workers who have otherwise been left behind by the growing divide between the elite and the less fortunate. Minnesota is a state of abundance; requiring employers to provide 48 hours of paid leave for employees to care for their loved ones or themselves is not asking too much – it is the least we should require of employers to do business in our state.

On behalf of the workers of Minnesota AFSCME Council 5, we ask for your support for H.F. 7, Earned Sick and Safe Time.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Julie Bleyhl".

Julie Bleyhl, Executive Director

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ethan Vogel".

Ethan Vogel, Legislative Director

*AFSCME Council 5 is a union of more than 43,000 working Minnesotans from across the state. We advocate for excellence in services for the public, dignity in the workplace, and opportunity and prosperity for all workers.*